

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Original) An introducing apparatus comprising:  
a tubular sheath having an external diameter, the sheath having a sheath passage including an internal diameter sized to receive a medical instrument there through, the sheath extending from a sheath distal end to a sheath proximal end;  
a movable valve assembly including a valve, the movable valve assembly movably coupled proximal to the sheath, the movable valve assembly movable from a first position to a second position along a portion of the introducing apparatus, in the first position the valve is disposed through the longitudinal axis of the sheath, in the second position the valve is disposed away from the longitudinal axis of the sheath, the movable valve assembly movable from the second position to the first position along the introducing apparatus while the medical instrument is disposed through the sheath passage along at least the sheath proximal end.
2. (Original) The introducing apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein the valve includes a membrane coupled with a sliding member.
3. (Original) The introducing apparatus as recited in claim 2, wherein the membrane includes at least one slit therein.
4. (Original) The introducing apparatus as recited in claim 3, wherein the at least one slit is substantially parallel with a longitudinal axis of the movable valve assembly, and the movable valve assembly travels along the longitudinal axis.
5. (Original) The introducing apparatus as recited in claim 1, further comprising a dilator disposed through the sheath.

6. (Original) The introducing apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein the at least one tab is defined in part by a tab longitudinal axis, and the movable valve assembly slides along the tab longitudinal axis when moving from the second position to the first position.
7. (Original) The introducing apparatus as recited in claim 6, wherein the movable valve assembly includes a valve support member coupled with a seal, and the valve support member includes at least one arm at least partially encompassing the at least one tab.
8. (Original) The introducing apparatus as recited in claim 1, further comprising a releasable side port.
9. (Original) The introducing apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein the movable valve assembly includes an open end, the open end traveling over at least a portion of the sheath passage when the movable valve assembly moves from the second position to the first position.
10. (Currently Amended) An introducing apparatus comprising:
  - a tubular sheath having an external diameter, the sheath having a sheath passage including an internal diameter sized to receive a medical instrument there through, the sheath extending from a sheath distal end to a sheath proximal end;
  - a movable valve assembly including a valve, the movable valve assembly defined in part by a movable valve longitudinal axis, the movable valve assembly moves from a second position to a first position along the movable valve longitudinal axis, the movable valve assembly movable from a first position to a second position along a portion of the introducer introducing apparatus, in the first position the valve is disposed through the longitudinal axis of the sheath, in the second position the valve is disposed away from the longitudinal axis of the sheath;
  - the movable valve assembly having an open end substantially aligned with the movable valve longitudinal axis, and the valve disposed within at least a portion of the open end.
11. (Original) The introducing apparatus as recited in claim 10, wherein the valve comprises a membrane.

12. (Original) The introducing apparatus as recited in claim 11, wherein the membrane has a slit therein.
13. (Original) The introducing apparatus as recited in claim 12, wherein the slit is substantially parallel with the movable valve longitudinal axis.
14. (Original) The introducing apparatus as recited in claim 10, further comprising a dilator disposed through the sheath passage.
15. (Original) The introducing apparatus as recited in claim 10, further comprising a side port assembly releasably coupled with the sheath, and the side port assembly including means for releasing the side port from the sheath without damage or separation of the sheath or the side port.
16. (Original) The introducing apparatus as recited in claim 10, wherein the movable valve assembly is slidable relative to the at least one tab.
17. (Currently Amended) An introducing apparatus comprising:
  - an elongate tubular sheath having an external diameter, the sheath having a bore including an internal diameter sized to receive a dilator there through, the sheath comprising a separable sheath;
  - the sheath extending from a distal end to a proximal end;
  - the sheath including at least one tab extending away from a longitudinal axis of the sheath; and
  - a side port assembly coupled with the sheath with [[the]] a coupling, and the side port assembly includes one or more features allowing for the side port to be released from the sheath without damage or separation of the sheath or the side port.

18. (Original) The introducing apparatus as recited in claim 17, wherein the side port assembly is coupled with the sheath with a snap-fit connection.

19. (Original) The introducing apparatus as recited in claim 17, wherein the side port assembly is threadingly coupled with the sheath.

20. (Original) The introducing apparatus as recited in claim 17, further comprising a valve disposed between the sheath and the side port assembly.

21. (Original) The introducing apparatus as recited in claim 17, further comprising a movable valve assembly movably coupled relative to the at least one tab, the moveable valve assembly adapted to move from a first position to a second position, in the first position the movable valve assembly disposed through the longitudinal axis of the sheath, in the second position the movable valve assembly disposed away from the longitudinal axis of the sheath.

22. (Original) The introducing apparatus as recited in claim 17, further comprising a valve assembly coupled with the sheath.